An ODE,

TO

Mr. HANDEL.

[Price Six-pence.]

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Τω γαρ οντι το πρωτον αυτης και καλλιστον εργον ἡ εις τους Θεους ευχαρις-τια. εστιν αμοιβη, επομενον δε τουτω και δευτερον το της ψυχης καθαρσιον και εμμελες, και εναρμονιον συστημα. PLUT. περι Μουσικης.

O decus Phœbi & dapibus supremi
Grata testudo Jovis: o laborum
Dulce lenimen! HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY at Tully's Head in Pall-mall.

M.DCC.XLV.

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Advertiſement.

HE meaſure of the following Ode was firſt us'd by MILTON, *ſince whom I do not know of any Poet who has adopted it. It was choſen as admitting of a greater variety of modulation than any other of the ſame extent; as well as for the liberty it carries with it in being diſengag'd from Rhyme.*

Our Lyric Poetry has been almoſt univerſally ſubject to that inconvenience, tho' of all kinds it demands the moſt free and unconfin'd verſification. I don't remember that Mr. CONGREVE *who wrote an Eſſay on the Pindaric manner, prefix'd to a ſpecimen of it, has taken notice of this defect, which our* COWLEY *and others ſo evidently labour under. It might be certainly excuſable to conclude the contrary, ſince he has himſelf fall'n into it in the very Ode annex'd. The great Author abovemention'd, who had ſo happily form'd himſelf on the antients, as to unite almoſt all their ſeparate excellencies, was in the moſt eminent degree a maſter of the force*

of

of Numbers ---- *Of this the* Sampſon Agoniſtes, *admirable as it is in many other reſpects, is a moſt compleat inſtance. That exact imitation of the* Græcian *model was one of his laſt productions; and, though the ſubject of it is not the moſt* Dramatical, *may give a very perfect idea of the Athenian Stage. The ſongs of the Chorus are labour'd with ſo critical a niceneſs, that there is ſcarce a* Mode *of Metre in uſe amongſt their Tragædians, of which it does not afford an example. All the different kinds of Stanza that are to be found in our firſt Poets, were borrow'd like their Tales and Allegories, from the* Italians *and* French ---- *Perhaps it may be doubted whether any one of them before* MILTON, *however full of genius and invention, was capable of executing an attempt of this nature.*---- Johnſon, *tho' he had in general an haughty contempt for the moderns, was himſelf a meer modern in this particular.* ---- *The deſign was reſerv'd for one, who was every way qualified to undertake it; and we may venture to pronounce, that, had he applied himſelf to Lyric Poetry, he would have had as few rivals in that as in the Epic.*

ODE

ODE

TO

Mr. *HANDEL*

WHILE you, great Author of the ſacred ſong,
With ſounds ſeraphic join the ſeraph hoſt,
Who, wond'ring with delight,
Hear numbers like their own,
And hail the kindred lays; forgive the Muſe,
That in unhallow'd, humble meaſure ſtrives
With them to praiſe, with them
Too impotent to ſing:

Yet

Yet her's the taſk to form the myrtle wreath,
And twine the vernal treaſures of the grove,
Whoſe mingling honours crown
The fav'rites of the Nine.

For thee, moſt favour'd of the ſacred train,
The choiceſt flow'rs ſhall breathe, for thee the bloom
Whoſe beauty longeſt boaſts
The freſhneſs of the ſpring:

Whether by thee the rural reed inſpir'd,
And wak'd to blythe ſimplicity, beguiles
The labour'd ſhepherd's toil
In ſoft Sicilian ſtrain,

Sweet'ning the ſtillneſs of the grove, whoſe ſhades
Fond fancy paints enlivened by the lay;
Or whether taught the flow
Of ſome ſmooth-gliding ſtream,

The

The melting flute, in liquid warbles ſooths,
And feigns to bubble, tuneful to the tale,
Of ACIS, injur'd boy,
Chang'd to a murm'ring rill.

Or, kindling courage in the glowing breaſt,
The voice of Battle breathes the big alarm,
The Trumpet's clangors fills,
And thunders in the Drum.

Or mid' the magic of ſucceſſive ſounds,
That rule alternate paſſions as they riſe,
Again TIMOTHEUS lives,
Again the victor yields,

To ſacred Melody, while thoſe ſweet gales
That breathe freſh odours o'er Elyſian glades,
And amaranthine bow'rs,
(Where now the golden harps

Of bliſsfull bards are ſtrung) the numbers wait
To DRYDEN's laurel'd ſhade; he yet more bleſt,
Smiles, conſcious of the charms
Of heav'n-born Harmony,

That prove the pow'r he ſings, and grace the ſong:
Nigh whom, ſupreme amidſt the funeral train,
In lovely greatneſs ſhines
The Bard, who fearleſs ſprung

Beyond the golden ſphere that girts the world,
And ſung embattled Angels: He too hears
Enchanting accents, with
Delights the lovely lay,

Reſponſive to his own; in penſive thought
Now lowly languid to the lulling lute,
That ſuits the Cypreſs Queen
And makes deep ſadneſs ſweet;

Ver. 53. See *Il Penſeroſo* ſet to Muſic by Mr. *Handel.*

Or to the plaintive warbles of the wood,
Whose wanton measure in the gentle flow
Of soft'ned notes, returns
Wild echoes to the strain.

But hark! the Dryad MIRTH with cheering horn
Invites her mountain sister to the chace,
The jocund rebecks join
The merriment of MAY

That to the tabor trips, and treads the round
Of rustic measures to the sprightly pipe,
Mingled with merry peals
That fill the festal joy.

But O! great master of ten thousand sounds,
That rend the concave in exulting songs,
And round *anointed* Kings
In shouting Pæans roll

Ver. 57. Alluding to the Song, *Sweet Bird*, &c.
Ver. 61. See *L'Allegro*.

Maſter of high Hoſannahs, that proclaim
In pomp of Martial Praiſe the GOD of HOSTS,
Who treads to duſt the foe,
And conquers with the ſling:

O! taught the deep ſolemnity of grief,
That ſwells the ſullen ſlowneſs of the trump,
And gives the gentler woe
Of ſoothing flutes to join
In ſweet reſponſe the thunder of the field:
What breath divine firſt blending with thy ſoul,
Infus'd this ſacred force
Of magic Melody,

Nor here confin'd? for higher yet the ſtrain,
That ſuits thy Lay, melliſluous AMBROSE, rais'd
To mighty ſhouts return'd
By hymning Hierarchies,

Who

Ver. 73. See the Epinicion in *Saul.*
Ver. 77. Alluding to the *Dead March* in *Saul.*
Ver. 86. St. *Ambroſe*, ſtiled *Doctor Melliſluus.*
Ver. 88. Alluding to the ſymphony of the words *We believe that thou ſhalt come to be our Judge*, in the new *Te Deum.*

Who ſound *thrice Holy!* round the ſaphire throne
In ſolemn jubily; the ſtrain that fills
With force of pleaſing dread
The ſeraphs awful blaſt,

'Till fervent Faith and ſmiling Hope behold
The dawn of endleſs day: or ſpeaks the GOD
Whoſe Vengeance widely ſpreads
The Darkneſs palpable,

And kindles half the ſtorm, with thunder hail,
Hail mixt with Fire; divides the deep Abyſs,
And to the vaſt profound
The horſe and rider hurls;

Tremendous theme of ſong! the theme of love
And melting mercy HE, when ſung to ſtrains,
Which from prophetic lips
Touch'd with ethereal fire,
Breath'd

Ver. 100. See the Oratorio of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*.
Ver. 102, to *v.* 106. See the ſacred Oratorio of *Meſſiah*, Part I.

Breath'd balmy Peace, yet breathing in the charm
Of healing ſounds; fit prelude to the pomp
Of choral energy,
Whoſe lofty accents riſe

To ſpeak MESSIAH's names; the God of Might,
The Wond'rous and the Wiſe—the Prince of Peace.
Him, feeder of the flock
And leader of the lambs,

The tuneful tenderneſs of trilling notes
Symphonious ſpeaks: Him pious pity paints
In mournful melody
The man of ſorrows; grief

Sits heavy on his ſoul, and bitterneſs
Fills deep his deadly draught—He deigns to die—
The God who conquers Death,
When, burſting from the Grave,

Mighty

Ver. 106 to *v.* 120. See *Meſſiah*. Part II.

Mighty he mounts, and wing'd with rapid winds,
Thro' Heav'ns wide portals opening to their Lord,
To boundleſs realms return'd,
The King of Glory reigns.

Pow'rs, dominations, thrones reſound HE REIGNS,
High Hallelujahs of empyreal hoſts,
And pealing Praiſes join
The thunder of the ſpheres.

But whither Fancy wafts thy wanton wing,
That trembles in the flight? and whither ſtretch'd
Purſues the lofty lay,
Worthy the Maſter's name,

Whoſe Muſic yet in airy murmurs plays
And vibrates on the ear? —Preſerve, ye gales,
Wrapt in the ſweet'ned breeze,
Each dying note: Ye winds,

Be huſh'd, while yet the ſacred numbers live.
But hence! with ideot leer, thou dim-ey'd form
Of Folly, taught to lift
In ſhew of ſenſeleſs glee

To empty trills, enervate languiſhment
And mimic'ry of ſounds: hence! blaſt of Hell,
That lov'ſt, with venom'd breath,
To taint the ripening bloom

That merit boaſts; thee, Envy, black Deſpair,
Thee kindred fiends to native realms recall.
There dart the livid glance,
And howling bite the chain.

FINIS.